



A slide spilled onto railroad tracks near Soldier's Summit, causing delays in train schedules.

# Slide Delays Rail Traffic

By PAT CHRISTIAN  
Herald Staff Writer

A 75-to-100-foot-wide slide near Soldier Summit delayed east-west Denver & Rio Grande Railroad movement Friday and Saturday.

Crews continued Saturday using heavy equipment to remove slide debris that was blocking one of two rail lines, but D&RG officials said east-west rail traffic still continues to move.

"There's about a 50-foot wide section that is covering some rails," said Lyle Gomm, emergency management coordinator for the U.S. Forest Service.

Gomm was flying over the slide Friday with Lt. Gary Clayton, Utah County Sheriff Department's coordinator of emergency operations, looking for potential

slide dangers.

Randy Taylor, manager of Sheepcreek Inn at Tucker said railroad workers reported the slide was just west of Soldier Summit in the switch-back area of track that does not parallel Highway Six.

He said rail traffic was still moving past the his inn although other aircraft passengers reported delays were caused as trains had to be switched from one track to the other.

Gomm said at least three slides were identified on the flight, including one in the Gardner Canyon area near Nephi that threatens a water system and a slide on the south side of Spanish Fork Canyon that endangers no roads or man-made structures. One other slide was spotted on the

mountains that front Utah Valley between Utah County and Nephi.

Clayton said evidence of many small slides was seen but could be expected. None are serious threats, however.

Clayton told his findings to the county employees flooding response organization meeting Friday afternoon. Clayton reported spotting heavy snowpack on the flight over Central Utah and advised county employees to be ready for flooding this weekend.

Clayton said a muddy Spanish Fork River indicates mud is sliding into the waterway but recently completed ripraping on the county's rivers looks good from the air.

"We are better prepared to handle any flooding this year than we were in 1983," he added.



# A Year for Remembering Thistle

## Disaster Eerie for Elva Webb

By JOSEPHINE ZIMMERMAN  
Herald Staff Writer

leave a heating stove, gas range and washer because they couldn't get them out.

"The man from Loudermilk Construction Company told me later the property was under 170 feet of water," she said.

Her house, like several others, floated off its foundation and eventually was towed to a far end of the 3.5-mile lake, where it settled in 15 feet of mud.

how long the road would be torn up.

"We went back down to buy the groceries, and I wasn't sure we were going to get back up," she said.

Mrs. Webb lived in Thistle from 1942 until last year, and for many years she was the election registration agent, and all the Thistle residents voted at her home. In 1942 there were 350 people in

She said she had notified county clerk William Huish and election clerk Vera Gates that she had saved the election records.

"They said they weren't sure they would have been that dedicated under the circumstances."

She and her brother dispute the notion that 50 people lost their homes in the Thistle disaster.

"There weren't that many permanent residents in Thistle, not for years. I knew them all. If all the people from Birdseye and clear up to Sheep Creek were included, it still wouldn't make 50 people."



"If people say the Thistle

"It was the eeriest thing I've ever seen...that water creeping back. It was a silent thing, and it was going against nature," said Elva Webb, who lost her home under the waters of Thistle Lake.

Mrs. Webb went through the 1952 flood at her home in Thistle, but then "the water just rushed through and was gone. It wasn't like this, with the water creeping back upstream."

Mrs. Webb was leaning against the sink in her kitchen, watching





A view of Spanish Fork Canyon with Tistle in the background. The road was on the south side of the river instead of the north as it is

today. Photograph taken by George E. Anderson.

Picture courtesy Rell G. Francis

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